

Ervinus Zirbes

COMMUNISM in SPAIN

1931 - 1936

ERVINUS ZIRBES.
ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY.

By
G. M. GODDEN

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Communist Zines

Spanish Communism 1931-1936

G. M. GODDEN

THE attack launched during 1936 on the people of Spain, under the inspiration of International Communism, is no sudden eruption of a political volcano. It is the logical, inevitable outcome of carefully prepared operations, extending over many years of skilled propaganda, and carried out with a single undeviating aim, through expert leaders, under a unified control. Those are three conditions which will always ensure a considerable measure of success. In the following pages an outline is given of these operations during the last five years in Spain.

It will be recalled that convents were burning in Spain in 1931; and that the new Spanish Constitution was devised in that year by a committee, the chairman of which, Señor Jimenez de Asua, had just returned from spending a year in Soviet Russia. What was Soviet Russia devising for Spain in 1931-32? During this period the XII Plenum was held of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, sitting in Moscow. The theses adopted included the statement that "*the pre-requisites of a revolutionary crisis are being created at a rapid pace in Spain.*" The elaboration of this statement is worth quoting in full, with the proviso that statements made at a Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International are rapidly translated into action. As Lenin himself said: "*Our theory is not*

a dogma but a manual of action" (*Left Wing Communism*, p. 53).

Here is the Soviet "manual of action" for Spain in 1932:

The growth of the elements of a revolutionary crisis finds expression in the impetus given to the economic and political strikes of the proletariat, in the budding revolutionary movement of the peasantry, in the mass movement of the petty-bourgeoisie against the monarchy (students' demonstrations, &c.), in the intensification of the national revolutionary movement in Catalonia and Biscay, in the disintegration of the army, and in the confusion which reigns in the ranks of the ruling classes and their parties (*Theses of XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.*, pp. 10-11, English Edition).

This is a comprehensive manual of action for carrying out, ultimately, the "task that now confronts all the Communist Parties (*i. e.* in all countries) of preparing the working class for the decisive battles for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," especially by "concrete application of the United Front." Further, in the lengthy report made by Kuusinen to the XII Plenum, special mention was made of Spain as illustrating the desired conversion of economic strikes "into genuine revolutionary struggles," to an extent that "the Spanish Proletariat has never witnessed before." Kuusinen declared that what was happening in these struggles was, above all, "the further development of the Spanish Revolution" (*Prepare for Power*, O. Kuusinen, p. 37, English Edition).

In Spain during those years of the fall of the monarchy, and of the creation of the new Constitution (by a Committee led by a Chairman from Moscow), an observer has told us how manual workers and peasants, students "who profess to find inspiration and Arcadia in everything Russian," politicians, and extreme Radical Socialists, were all in their re-

spective spheres carrying on an increasing, fervent propaganda against Christianity in general, and the Catholic Church in particular. This propaganda had gained notable successes in Madrid; and already the hideous nightmare of 1936 was felt to be approaching. "The fearful menace of anarchy and chaos hangs like a crimson shadow over once bright and sunny Spain." This was written in Madrid in November 1931. Lenin's "manual of action" was already making itself felt, and felt precisely where International Communism carries out its most deadly preliminary work, that is on the "*cultural front*."

It is too often forgotten that the official program for Communist action, in all countries, has declared: "*The Communist Party must take over and control the entire 'spiritual life'*" (Program of the Communist International, *Pravda*, May, 1928). It is the "entire spiritual life," no less than the cultural and political life, of Spain which is threatened today with Communist domination.

In 1932, the second year of the Spanish Republican Government, acts typical of Communist activity took place throughout Spain. At Sollana, in the province of Alicante, a Soviet Republic was proclaimed "in the usual manner." Incidentally, one may remark that the effort to create a Soviet Spain has been proclaimed "in the usual manner" during the past three months, by burning and desecration of churches, the massacre and tortures of priests, the outrages on and executions of nuns, the obscene mockery of representations of Christ. At Sollana everything was done according to the correct Moscow model. The church was set on fire; the priest was shot at and seriously wounded in the neck and face—in Spain in 1932 there was still some semblance of government authority, and actual murder might be punished; the town hall was attacked and the archives destroyed;

municipal funds were seized; telephone lines were cut and railway sleepers were torn up.

In Seville the suppression of the Communist strike of January 1932 required four armored cars, with machine-guns, machine-gun posts on the flat roofs of the houses, and airplanes circling overhead. In Madrid, anyone distributing Communist literature was chased and arrested. Bombs were thrown in Malaga, and there was sniping by armed strikers. Villages hoisted the Red Flag of International Communism. In a statement to *La Voz* the Minister for Home Affairs announced that £50,000 had been sent to Spain on January 9 "as a subsidy for the revolt," and declared that the conspiracy had been organized "abroad," in other words, by the Headquarters of International Communism. The Secretariat for the direction of Communism in Western Europe, including a special section for Spain and Portugal, Mexico, and the South American States, was reported to have been transferred, at some time, from Moscow to Berlin; it is now believed to be in Paris. But whether in Paris, Berlin, or in Moscow, the directive power which aims at creating in every country class hatred, hatred of the Church and of all religion, and civil disorder *preparatory to civil war*, is the same. It is well to recall that the Sub-Secretariat for Section XI, *i.e.*, that including Spain, of the Communist International, is under the complete control of the Chief Secretariat of the International in Moscow.

In March 1932 the "Republican" Government betrayed weakness—or was it complicity?—in permitting a Communist Congress to meet in Seville. One of the delegates to this Congress was Ramon Casanellas, who was one of the three murderers of the Spanish Prime Minister, Don Eduardo Dato, in 1921. Casanellas, after the murder, succeeded in escaping to Russia, where he lived many years, serving in the Soviet army. Encouraged by the recent

progress of Communism in Spain, he returned and was engaged in Communist propaganda prior to the Seville Congress. The open attendance at the Congress of a criminal who had been sentenced to thirty years' hard labor was, however, too much even for the Government of 1932, and Casanellas was arrested. During February and March, it is useful to note, special lectures in excellent Spanish were transmitted by wireless from Moscow, at 9 p. m., explaining various aspects of Soviet policy. Assuredly International Communism, and its Agent-in-Chief, the Soviet Government, is a past master in the disintegration, by propaganda, of the "back of the Front." By June even the cautious *Times* correspondent admits, in a message from Madrid, "evidence continues to accumulate that the Spanish Republic is being made the victim of a vast conspiracy against law and order . . . in the background there is reason to believe the existence of clandestine and powerful forces."

In November bands of "peasant workers" were marching under the Red Flag and compelling the landowners to salute the Communist banner. The Minister of Justice stated frankly that he was eliminating magistrates who did not apply "Republican justice," thereby causing a not unfounded apprehension that henceforth in Spain there were to be two sorts of justice. One-half of the youth of Spain was not receiving any education. The Cabinet introduced a Bill for the confiscation of Church property, including the sacred vessels, ornaments and missals, although the new Constitution forbade confiscation of property. Already the typical Moscow hatred of Christianity was showing itself in the destruction of the ancient stone crosses which have been a feature of the landscape in Northwest Spain. In a single night seven of these stone crosses, one of them dating from the twelfth century, were destroyed in Betanzon in Galicia (*The Times*, May 16, 1932). As the

year drew to its close the shootings at sentries and at the Civil Guards were extended into shooting, without warning, into a procession of the Blessed Sacrament at Cogollo de Veja in the Province of Granada.

The record for Spain for 1931-32 abundantly justifies the claim of the XII Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (which met in Moscow in September 1932), made under the heading, *Preparation for Direct Battles for Power for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*: "The revolutionary crisis is growing unevenly, but everywhere there is a growth of the revolutionary upsurge"; and again, "the economic struggle of the proletariat is assuming more and more a revolutionary character." Further, the experts in Moscow, writing in October 1932, announced that "*Revolution is taking place in Spain, and at the present time the mass movement is seething and showing tendencies to develop into an armed revolt of the people*" (*The Communist International*, October, 1932. English Edition, p. 577). This was the long-sighted view of the Communist International—four years ago. Had the actual or potential rulers of Spain possessed equal clarity of vision the hideous civil war of 1936 might have been averted (*Theses XII Plenum E.C.C.I., The Communist International*, October 1, 1932).

It is significant that, already, in 1932, Moscow was urging on all its National Communist Parties "the tactics of the United Front" (*Ibid.*, p. 580). In accordance with the strict obligation of implicit obedience by all the National Communist Parties to the decrees of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the Communist Party of Spain, in 1933, twice proposed the United Front to the Spanish Socialist Party.

In dealing with the United Front, the *Front Populaire*, or the *Frente Popular*, it must, of course, be

always remembered that, in the words of Dimitrov, Secretary-General to the Communist International: "*Only the Communist Party is at bottom the initiator, the organizer, and the driving force of the United Front*" (G. Dimitrov. *Speech at the VII World Congress of the Communist International*, English Edition, p. 21).

The result of the preliminary spade-work done during 1933 for a "*Frente Popular*" became fully apparent in the bloodshed in the Asturias in 1934; but already, in January of 1933, it was found necessary to proclaim martial law in Spain, and the military courts were empowered to try prisoners. A widespread organization for creating disorder was evident.

These outbreaks included general strikes betraying a concerted plan; raiding of houses in search of arms; cutting of telephone wires and the felling of telegraph posts to impede police movements. After a Communist attempt to raid a dynamite store, Communist pamphlets were seized which declared that a general strike was to be called "with a view to promoting a social revolution"; a declaration recalling the statement of the Communist International the previous year in Moscow: "The economic struggle of the proletariat is assuming more and more a revolutionary character . . . economic strikes frequently grow into political strikes" (*XII Plenum of E.C.C.I., The Communist International*, English Edition, October 1, 1932).

The, we repeat, always cautious *Times* correspondent admits, in his despatch of January 11, 1933, that then "subversive propaganda" was "running rife and apparently gaining strength, and encouraging elements of disorder to resort to violence," and, he states, writing from Barcelona:

One of the outstanding leaders of the Communist movement here is Andres Nin, a Catalan, who was in

Moscow as one of Trotsky's chief lieutenants, when Trotsky was in power there, and who has been his confidential agent here, preparing the groundwork for the possible triumph of Communism. In a recent statement to your correspondent Nin gave a clue to the working of the minds of all those bent upon bringing about a social revolution. He said: "We began first with an educational campaign, and now we are engaged in organizing Workers' Soviets in anticipation of the crucial moment when the Workers must be the first to arrive on the scene and to seize power . . . we undertook to group the masses round the symbols of democracy, such symbols as they could understand, to give the masses illusions . . . we organized political juntas, which in Spain have a traditional significance, and *which at the right moment could be converted into Soviets.*"

Comrade Nin added that he and his colleagues sought to implant ideas which would lead to power being placed in the hands of the masses and of youth. In other words, Trotsky's lieutenant was faithfully carrying out in Spain the Leninist policy of "All Power to the Soviet!" Spain is a poor country and it will be questioned how the small Communist Party of Spain, numbering less than 10,000 in 1933, could finance propaganda on the scale indicated by these despatches, and by the results witnessed in 1934-36. The answer is indicated in the financial reports of the Communist International which admitted an expenditure of nearly a quarter million pounds at par (£240,000) for the year 1931, and, by the English Home Office report which showed that in one year £27,900 was disbursed in England by the Communist Party of Great Britain, of which sum at least £10,300 was derived from payments of £5 Bank of England notes, made by a bank in Moscow. There would be no difficulty for Moscow in the sending of equivalent amounts in *pesetas* to Spain.

Throughout 1934 the Communist Party of Spain

was organizing the new tactical policy of the United Front (*The People's Front*, Emile Burns, pp. 10 seq.). The official organ of the Communist International reported in April: "The Communist Party of Spain occupies a fighting position which is unfolding" (*Communist International*, English Edition, April 1934, p. 292). The XIII Plenum of the Executive of the Communist International had already called on "all Sections (that is the Communist Party of each country) persistently to fight for the realization of a United Militant Front"; and early in April the directive in Moscow was able to record that the Spanish Communist Party was achieving considerable successes in the mass revolutionary strike movement, after concentrating on the United Front policy. Moscow added that the "question of organizing a direct struggle for power" was now urgently raised for Spain.

The typical Moscow doctrine of gaining power through violence was bearing fruit in Spain, according to the approximate statistics issued for the first six months of 1934, of crimes of a political and social character, *i. e.*, 102 deaths, 140 woundings, 150 bomb explosions, and the confiscation by the police of 500 bombs and considerable quantities of explosives and small arms. In September a United Front of the Socialists and Communists was effected; and the result of the union was seen immediately in a joint meeting in Madrid of 40,000 demonstrators, organized by the Communist and Socialist Youth. Squads of youths and girls, wearing red shirts, paraded in military formation; and speakers *belonging to both parties* "announcing that only a Marxist régime would satisfy them" (*The Times*, September 17, 1934). The official organ of the Communist International claimed that the "Workers' Alliance," organized in the winter of 1933-34 by the Spanish Socialist Party, had been converted into Workers' and Peasants' Alliance,

and thereby into Spanish Soviets; and that, in the autumn of 1934 "the Communist Party of Spain had succeeded in taking into its hands the initiative in the struggle for the 'Workers' and Peasants' Alliances'" (*The Communist International*, English Edition, December 5, 1934, pp. 899 seq.).

At the end of September the Communist Party of Spain called on the Spanish masses to prepare for decisive action for the struggle for Power and the Dictatorship of Workers' and Peasants' Alliances (Soviets), and for "a fraternal alliance with and the defence of the Soviet Union." But already this call from Moscow was camouflaged as the conflict today is camouflaged, as being one for democracy: "We see a clearly formulated program of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship," states the official Communist record of those autumn months in Spain, with the comment that the struggle to operate the democratic dictatorship "would inevitably lead to the speedy passage to the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," pure and simple.

The armed rising in the Asturias begun on October 4, 1934, followed immediately on these incitements to erect "Soviet Power." The "first Soviet Republic in Spain" sprang into being, and maintained its position until subdued by the Government troops. Moscow despatched a sum of £30,000 to aid the participants in the fighting for the first Spanish Soviets (*Spain*, October, 1934. S.R.I. Paris). A Red Army was formed by the United Front of the Asturian Communists, Socialists and Anarchists; and a currency was circulated bearing the Moscow hammer and sickle superimposed upon the ordinary currency of Spain. By October 18, Oviedo, the centre of the fighting, was a heap of ruins, and 45,000 prisoners had been taken.

The *Communist International*, in the issue of November 5, 1934, sums up Northern Spain's Red

October: "*The workers of the Asturias fought for Soviet Power under the leadership of the Communists.*"

Meanwhile, on October 4, a General Strike began which soon extended throughout Spain, and was very generally accompanied by an armed struggle and in some cases by the establishment of local Soviets. Up to October 12, armed conflicts with government troops were taking place in Madrid.

The year closed with a spectacular extension in Spain of the Moscow policy of the United Front. In December 1,200,000 organized Spanish workers "moved into line with the Red Front" as a result of the decision of the Central Committee of the Spanish Anarchist Unions to enter the United Front Workers' Alliance.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International has laid it down, as an axiom of Communist strategy, that nationalist movements must be employed as a stepping-stone to Communism. Documents found in Barcelona, after the outbreaks of 1934, showed that the Catalan separatist movement was being substantially financed by Soviet funds. In December 1934, the Soviet organization for the world-wide support of revolution, in Moscow, known as M.O.P.R., began a special campaign for the financial help of the Spanish revolutionaries. "The campaign," wrote *The Times* correspondent, "is in full swing in Moscow and Leningrad, and is apparently being extended to all industrial areas. M.O.P.R. assembles factory hands, who 'voluntarily' authorize the deduction of a portion of their wages for despatch to comrades in Spain. The majority of meetings authorize the deduction of one per cent of a month's wages; but some authorize as much as four per cent."

Already, in October, 1934, the Executive Committees of the Communist International, and of the

Young Communist International had decided to continue their "concrete assistance" to the Spanish comrades. Four agents were appointed, under the chairmanship of the well-known French Communist, Marcel Cachin, who is himself a member of the small Presidium of the Communist International. These agents were instructed particularly to rally Socialists and Communists inside and outside Spain for united action against the existing Spanish Government; and during this campaign the Executive of the C.I. authorized agents to sink differences between adherents of the Communist International and Socialists, if the latter were willing to help in keeping the revolutionary flame burning in Spain. In view of recent events it is interesting to note that in 1934, Paris was the "organizational centre" of the work of the Communist International in Spain (*The Times*, October 19, 1934; December 3, 1934).

In summing up the events of Spain's "Red October of 1934" the Communist International, while frankly admitting temporary defeat, concludes on a note of triumph:

The events that took place represent, not the end of the developed struggle for power for Soviets, but only its beginning . . . the idea which the Spanish proletariat has been lacking for years has penetrated at last into the minds of the masses, namely that the struggle for Soviet Power can be their only aim. This idea which has taken hold of the masses has become a tremendous material force.

In 1934 Moscow had successfully sown the wind; in 1936 unhappy Spain was to reap the whirlwind.

The measure of success achieved in 1934 in the creation of a Communist United Front in Spain, in accordance with the directions of Moscow, was carried forward to the proposed erection of a "People's Front," to include Left Republicans, in 1935. Once "Unity" was achieved with the Social Democrats,

then Communist action could be extended on a wide front, and help for such action could be enlisted among the Liberals of all countries, under the cloak of defence of "democracy." *This is exactly the cloak under which Spanish Communism is operating today.* The newspapers and platforms of Europe and the United States are crowded with writers and speakers demanding help and sympathy for the Communists, Syndicalist and Anarchist forces in Spain on the plea that these forces are fighting heroically for the Spanish "Democratic" Constitution. Nothing could be further from the truth. The plea for "Spanish Democracy" is the Trojan Horse which Dimitrov, Secretary-General of the Communist International, bade all Communists employ as their strategy, in his famous speech at the VII World Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow during the summer of 1935. This august body had not met for seven years. It is the supreme controlling power for all Communists in all countries.

The new policy of "co-operation" with democrats was such a complete reversal of previous Communist tactics that nothing less than the authority of the World Congress could endorse it. It is significant, in view of the subsequent events in Spain, that the VII World Congress also defined its policy—a policy binding on all the sixty-five nations represented at the Congress—as regards Civil War. At the first day of the Congress, and in the presence of Stalin, who led the presiding Committee on to the platform "amid thunderous applause," the declaration was made that "the majority of the proletariat must be won for armed insurrection." In the address that opened the World Congress it was affirmed, moreover, that there was a growing acceptance of the doctrine of necessary bloodshed, and of the slogan "For Soviet Power." Also, in this opening address, it was announced that the Soviet Union—not, be it noticed,

the Communist International, but the Soviet Union, "remains as the basis and the support of the World Revolution"—revolution carried through by armed force, for, as Lenin said, and what Lenin did not know about revolutions is not worth knowing, "What kind of revolution is that without shooting?"

The necessity of armed insurrection having been affirmed at the VII World Congress, the Communist International proceeded to deal with the new world policy of the extended "United Front," that policy which swept Spain in the elections for the *Frente Popular* of last February.

The *Frente Popular* of Spain was born, not in the ballot of a free democratic people, but on the blood-stained fields of the Asturias; not under the Spanish flag, but under the red flag, blazoned with the hammer and sickle of International Communism.

Having pronounced this mandate for the creation of universal civil wars, the VII World Congress proceeded to record its appreciation of the attempted insurrection, with bloodshed, in Spain of the previous October: "We appreciate the fact that in Spain leaders, under pressure of the masses, resolved on the armed struggle," and again: "What enthusiasm the banner of the fight for Soviet Government, raised in the Asturias, inspired in the heart of every worker!" Enthusiasm, yes; but enthusiasm tempered with stringent criticism of the cause of the defeat of the October insurrection, viz., that "*the Spanish Socialists saw fit, even at the moment of the armed struggle, to ignore the experience of the Russian Revolution.*" The experiences of the Russian Revolution have been very faithfully copied during the events of last summer in Spain.

It was the famous Secretary-General of the Communist International, Dimitrov, who elaborated and defined the new policy of a "United Front of all Proletarians" in his great speech of August 2, 1935, at

the VII World Congress. Few of his hearers in the Congress Hall in Moscow that August day could have foreseen that within ten months armed forces would be ravaging Spain—burning churches, desecrating altars, altar-vessels and vestments, and slaughtering priests in the Moscow manner.

“The formation of a broad People’s Front,” declared Dimitrov, “providing for joint action with social-democratic parties, is a necessity. Cannot we endeavor to unite the Communist, Social-Democratic, Catholic, and other workers? Comrades, you will remember the ancient tale of the capture of Troy. Troy was inaccessible to the armies attacking her, thanks to her impregnable walls. And the attacking army was unable to achieve victory until, with the aid of the famous Trojan Horse, it managed to penetrate to the very heart of the enemy’s camp. We revolutionary workers, it seems to me, should not be shy about using the same tactics.” Again and again Dimitrov drove home the new policy of united action with the recently derided Social-Democrats. In countries with a Social-Democratic Government, Communists are to take joint action with the Democratic Parties and organizations; they are to say, “Let us join hands for the battle.” Further, Dimitrov declared for Communist cooperation in the formation of a United Front Government particularly when “the masses are not yet ready to rise in insurrection to fight, under the Communist Party leadership, for the achievement of Soviet Power.”

Let us see how the new policy of Moscow, declared in August, 1935, has been operated in Spain. In January it was reported from Catalonia that:

The tendency in favor of a United Front is growing steadily . . . the situation indicates that further fierce and bloody struggles are in the offing . . . from the very beginning of the struggle the Communist Party of Catalonia are in the front ranks of the fight

... in the national question the Communist Party has a concrete program and fights for it . . . the Communist Party of Catalonia will co-ordinate the Spanish workers and peasants, and finally establish a Catalonia Soviet Republic (*International Press Correspondence* [*Imprecorr*], January 19, 1935).

The streets of Barcelona witnessed, eighteen months later, exactly the "fierce and bloody struggles" thus foretold by the Communist organ *Imprecorr*; and in a city with every church burnt, with altars desecrated, with the bodies of dead religious exhumed for mockery, and the heads of murdered priests carried through the streets, with shooting-squads carrying out the assassination of whole families, and the brutal murders of nuns, the scenes which inaugurated the Russian Soviet Republic were faithfully repeated.

In February the Communist organ *Imprecorr* repeated that "the revolutionary spirit of the workers manifests itself with increasing power," and welcomed the appearance of red flags in Madrid, declaring that "the working class is now closing its ranks for decisive battle"—not a battle, be it noted, for a Democratic Constitutional Spain, but the battles of class war. In April the Communist Party of Spain claimed that lightning demonstrations and meetings, organized by the Party, were the order of the day; that political, economic, and solidarity strikes were following each other in an uninterrupted stream; and that a wave of protest, led by the Party, against the executions of revolutionary workers was sweeping over Spain. In this month, too, the Moscow-controlled organization which distributes financial and other assistance to Communists and propaganda to non-Communists all over Europe, under the camouflage of the "Workers' International Relief," known in Moscow as the M.O.P.R., was active in "organizing in all countries a campaign of solidarity" for the

"revolutionary fighters in Spain." Street demonstrations, meetings, and collections of money were to be held during the week preceding April 14, the date of the fourth anniversary of the *Spanish Republic*.

May was heralded by demonstrations of the workers and peasants throughout the whole of Spain on Communism's festival-day, May 1, according to the official pages of *Imprecorr*, in which the further claim was made: "The Peoples' United Front is gaining ground, and has the support of broad sections of the intellectuals. At the head of this fight stands the Communist Party. A new period of struggle is opening before the masses of the people of Spain, a struggle in which the Communist Party will be in the vanguard" (*Imprecorr*, May 25, 1936). In June, Jesús Hernandez, the present Minister of Education in the Caballero Government, was able to report that the United Front had been organized "in a thousand different forms," and that "the driving force, behind the whole movement is the Communist Party, which, working illegally, has managed to imbue the broad masses with the idea that only through a United Front will the Workers of Spain be able to defend their bread and liberty" (*Imprecorr*, June 1, 1936).

A significant statement was made a few weeks later at the VII World Congress of the Communist International. The representative of the Spanish Socialists declared, speaking in Moscow, August 5: "We are determined to wage the fight in our country for a *Socialist, and then for a Communist Republic . . . we join you in order to be able, in the no distant future, to erect the Red Banner of the international Soviet Republic . . . long live the Unity of the Proletariat! Long live World Revolution!*" This speech was received by the Congress (representing sixty-five nations) with prolonged applause, the delegates rising and according an ovation to the Spanish delegation. Certainly it was a speech after the heart of

Moscow, unless the tacticians had regretted so frank an avowal of the policy of the Trojan Horse—*i.e.*, support for a democratic Socialist Republic as the stalking-horse for the Communist “Republic.” As these words are written, the “Democratic Constitutional” Spanish Government of Spain, elected by the *Frente Popular* vote in February last, has already (September) given place to the government of Largo Caballero, who has chosen a Communist for his Minister of Education, and also for the post of Secretary to his Cabinet.

There is ample evidence during the second half of 1935 of the activity and extent of Communist operations in Spain in those fateful six months *before* the *Frente Popular* Election of 1936; for, as Lenin said, revolutions are not made on the barricades. Here are a few instances. In Madrid the political prisoners (numbered in Spain by the thousand, after the insurrection in the Asturias) installed in their prison a Marxist library, and on a pre-arranged day arranged themselves during their exercise in the form of a sickle and hammer, while an airplane took a photograph which was afterwards circulated in Madrid. In November the organ of the Left Socialists in Spain, *Claridad*, called for a statement of how the decisions of the VII World Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow during the summer, should be realized in Spain. Most significant of all, the news came at the close of the year that the United Front was achieving the union of Communists and Syndicalists.

The new year, 1936, opened with a prophetic utterance from the Right Party leader, Señor Calvo Sotelo—an utterance soon to be sealed by the speaker’s blood. Sotelo, speaking in Barcelona on January 19, 1936, warned the vast audiences listening to him that unless “patriotic Spaniards” bestirred themselves, there existed the danger that after the approaching

elections, "there would wave over Spain the Red flag, the symbol of the destruction of Spain's past, her ideals, and her honor" (*The Times*, January 20, 1936). The Red flag of International Atheist Communism has indeed waved over a great part of Spain within less than six months of this warning, and beneath its shadow outrages, sacrileges, murders, tortures, bestialities that defy description have taken place, inflicting stains on the honor of Spain that it will take many months to wipe out.

When the General Election took place in February, it was noticed that "*for the first time in Spain Bolshevik propaganda is being openly conducted.*" A manifesto, signed by "Friends of Russia," was profusely placarded, calling on the electors to vote for the Soviet system.

Hardly were the elections over, with what amounted in practice to a sweeping victory, owing to the system of Spanish representation, for the Popular Front candidates, when disorders broke out in various centres. In Alicante a convent was burnt to the ground, and the buildings of Catholic centers were fired; in Murcia the offices of the Catholic Popular Action were sacked; martial law was promulgated in both places, the Democratic Government within a few days of its instalment being already impotent to govern. Every succeeding week showed the growing power of the "proletariat," and the growing futility of the *Frente Popular* Government which so admirably filled the part of Dimitrov's Trojan Horse. "Indiscipline spreads like a disease," wrote the careful *Times* correspondent, only four weeks after the Elections, admitting that the amnesty to the 30,000 "political" prisoners had set free thousands of "district, Union, or Communist cell ringleaders," among whom were a "number of qualified desperadoes," and commenting on the "disorders, arson, and rioting" that the victory of the Popular

Front had ushered in, and on the fact that liberty was already, "at the mercy of the mob" (*The Times*, April 4, 1936).

In the month following the *Frente Popular* election, four churches and several convents were set on fire and sacked in Cadiz, with the destruction of paintings, statues, and furniture; in Granada a general strike was called by the Communists, and a "mob swept through the city, burning and sacking. Hardly a house belonging to a well-to-do citizen or a prominent Catholic escaped attack." In Madrid boys and girls were parading the streets with raised fists (the Red Front salute) and shouting Communist rallying cries. In Niebla the parish church was fired, and the organ, one of the oldest and largest in the world, destroyed. In Madrid, on the night of March 13, the church of San Luis, close to the Home Office, was set on fire, the crowd shouting Socialist and Communist slogans. *The Times'* report, two days later, was of a "trail of arson" extending from Cadiz to the center of Madrid, and involving destruction or damage to twenty churches, convents, schools, and other buildings.

In June a list of outrages committed in Spain during the five months of *Frente Popular* rule was submitted to the Cortes. It included the total destruction of 160 churches; the partial destruction of 251 churches; the total or partial destruction of 43 newspaper offices; 69 Catholic Centers destroyed; 28 churches closed. Meanwhile, deputies in the Cortes were singing the anthem of International Communism, which Moscow broadcasts nightly, the *Internationale*, their clenched fists raised in the Red Front salute. Had they in mind the prophecy of Lenin that Spain would become the second Soviet State in Europe?

By the end of March, 1936, the Communist strength was greatly enhanced by the amalgamation of the

Communist and Socialist Youth; an extension of the United Front of some 100,000 young enthusiasts. Early in April the official organ of the English section of the Communist International, the *Daily Worker*, announced that "everywhere throughout Spain the Red Flag is making a triumphal appearance; 60,000 agricultural workers, led by a Commission of Communist deputies, have taken over the entire Province of Badajoz; nothing that the Government can do is of the least avail" (*Daily Worker*, April 3, 1936). If the Trojan Horse "Government" of Spain was incapable of action, there was no lack of activity, this April, in Moscow. In the first week of April, 30 Communists left that city for Spain. They were chiefly young Spaniards who had spent periods varying from six to eighteen months in Soviet Russia "undergoing training in revolutionary practice." Prominent members of the Communist International and of the Red International of Labor Unions (the Profintern gave them a send-off in Moscow "with speeches explaining them to follow up recent successes in Spain by applying methods studied at first hand in the Soviet Union" (*The Times*, April 12, 1936). The organ of the Executive Committee of the Communist International declared after the Spanish *Frente Popular* Election, that "The iron is hot and must be struck now, sharply and boldly . . . the churches, monasteries, and Jesuits must be stripped of their wealth and discredited in the eyes of the people, and Catalans, Basques, and Galicians must be granted immediate self-determination."

Instruction for action, on the well-tryed lines of the Soviet revolution, of war upon religion and for action on the new Communist tactics of leading the proletariat "under the banners of a nationalist revolution," supplemented the despatch of trained emissaries of Communism into Spain. On April 16, Señor Sotelo, speaking in the Cortes, warned Spain

of. "the progressive Bolshevization of the Labor groups, and their open threats to supplant the Government by a Proletarian Dictatorship at the first opportunity." Within three months the opportunity had come. The impotent "Democratic" *Frente Popular* Government, which had never governed, was replaced by local Soviets, Tribunals, Night Brigades, Committees, Marxist Militia Detachments, which were turning a great part of Spain, and especially the churches and religious houses of Spain, into a Soviet shambles.

The documented evidence of a persistent, skilled, well-financed and carefully staffed Communist attack upon Spain during the past five years is uncontested. To recognize the scope and the ability of the attacking forces is the first requisite for defence. It is a requisite which has been singularly lacking in Spain; and the swift and sudden nemesis that befell the Spanish people in July and August, 1936, may well serve as a warning to other nations smugly assuring themselves that their intellectual centers, their schools, their youth, their administrative and civic *personnel*, their literature and drama and art are untouched.

If it be said, with truth, that there were deplorable predisposing causes in conditions which had been permitted to exist in Spain, are other nations guiltless in these respects? International Communism aims at creating a new life, spiritual as well as social and economic, on the shattered ruins of Christian civilization. When all the facts are made known of the Terror which has swept through Spain this summer of 1936—facts which have repeated, incident for incident, the Terror by which Soviet Russia was created—it will be recognized that the same force has been at work in Moscow and in Madrid.

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